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ENG 2009G-002: Literature and Human Values: Love, Hate, Obsession

Rosemary Buck
Eastern Illinois University

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ENGLISH 2009G LITERATURE AND HUMAN VALUES: LOVE, HATE, OBSESSION

Dr. Buck, Professor

Office: Coleman Hall, Room 3040

Telephone: Office: 581-5012 (Please leave voice mail if I'm not there)

Mailbox: English Dept Office, Coleman Hall, Room 3155

Office Hours: MWF 11:00-12:00 and by appointment.

Textbooks: Abcarian and Klotz, *Literature and the Human Experience*, 10th edition
Griffith, *Writing Essays about Literature*, 7th edition
The Little, Brown Handbook, 11th edition

Course Objective

This literature seminar is designed to develop your skills in critical thinking and analytical expression based on the reading of literary texts around our selected theme of love, hate, and obsession. This course will 1) introduce you to a variety of works of literature, 2) instruct you in the distinction of literary genres, 3) help you to become more sensitive and attentive readers, and 4) guide you in articulating--both in class discussion and in written discourse--a mature, informed reaction to literary works.

Course Requirements

The requirements of this course include two formal papers, daily folder assignments, and a final exam. In-class writing may be unannounced. This course will be conducted in seminar style so you will be required to discuss and present your work to the class throughout the semester. Formal Papers I and II (scope 5 pages--you may always write more) will be analytical and interpretive essays on selected works. The final exam will test your understanding of the theoretical content of the course; it will consist of an objective portion along with an essay portion. Paper and exam grades will be based on what you have to say (that is original and insightful) and how well you say it (clarity, development, and technical soundness). All written assignments must be turned in in print version, in person, in class; no electronic transmissions will be accepted. Course readings are attached. Please note that we will go faster or slower depending on the needs of the class.

Folder for Process Writing Materials

You will need to purchase a paper manilla folder for this class. That is where you will be keeping your writing for each unit. Please always bring your folders to class.

Folder writing assignments (home and in-class) are a large part of this course. You should plan on spending one hour per class time that we meet on folder writing you do at home. A folder response will be evaluated on how well the question/issue is logically thought out. You must write in full sentences and in paragraphs for all assignments (notes or fragments will not be accepted). I will evaluate what you say and how much you say that is logically insightful.

Always keep your writing process materials and folder assignments in your folder in an organized fashion so that you are sure not to lose anything. You will turn your folder in to me at the end of each unit along with your formal paper (see attached sheet for dates), but I will be collecting assignments occasionally as they are due (unannounced) so it is important that you come to class prepared with each assignment. Students who come to class unprepared will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

All home folder writing assignments must be typed. All in-class writing must be legible and neatly presented. If I cannot read your writing, you will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

Course Grading

The final course grade will be based on an average of the following grades.

Unit I = 33% (paper 20%; folder and presentations 10%)

Unit II = 33% (paper 20%; folder and presentations 10%)

Unit III = 33% (final exam 20%; folder and presentations 10%)

Failure to complete any component of the course (including the final exam) will result in failure of the course.

Scale for the course is 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; below 60% = F

Tardiness

Please be on time for class; habitual tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful of other class members. I will be taking roll each morning as soon as class begins. If you come in late, it is your responsibility to notify me after class so that I take your name off the absence sheet. If you fail to notify me at the end of class on the day you are late, you will be recorded as absent. Please do not ask me for a letter of recommendation if you are habitually tardy or absent from class or are unprepared with home assignments.

Absence Policy

See attached.

Late assignments

All written assignments must be submitted when due; no late assignments will be accepted. Papers are due when class begins on the designated dates. Make-up work will be permitted for excused absences only. All assignments must be turned in during class in print version at the designated times; no electronic versions will be accepted.

Typing and Presentation

Papers and at-home writing assignments must be typed (double-spaced) in MLA format.

Electronic Devices

No electronic devices of any kind, including laptops, may be used at any time during class; they will be counted as a disruption in class and as an unethical use of information during oral work conducted in class. After three occasions, the student will be reported to the judicial affairs office. Anyone with an electronic device not stowed away and out of use during an exam or in-class writing will receive an automatic F on the exam--no questions asked, no discussion. Anyone who leaves class to use a phone may not reenter class--you must wait until class has ended to get your belongings.

Classroom Behavior

According to EIU policy established by the judicial affairs office concerning classroom behavior, you are expected to remain seated at all times while class is in session, unless you have an emergency, because leaving and reentering class distracts other students from their learning and concentration. If you must leave class, you may not reenter until the class session is over to obtain your belongings. Please come to class with plenty of kleenex; that is not an excuse for leaving class.

Where to Go For Help with this Course

Come to see me in my office during my office hours and by appointment.

Cheating and Plagiarism

1. No one (not even the Writing Center, nor parents, nor tutors, nor friends) may read, proofread, or edit your writing over the course of the semester; you may read sections of the paper out loud to someone for feedback but you must always keep your paper in your own hands so that you have control and responsibility over your own work.

2. The assignments in this class require analytical and critical thinking; I am not interested in the information you find on the internet; I am interested in evaluating you on your own original ideas and interpretations of the readings; if you do consult the internet, you must always document individually each idea that you read and that you used. No one should assist you with home assignments; if you have questions, you should see me during office hours.

The English Department requires that instructors quote to all students the university's policy on plagiarism:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Use or reproduction of any material or ideas off the internet without proper documentation is considered plagiarism and will be penalized as above. Respect for the work of others, in other words, encompasses all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Information for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible. If you require extra time on timed in-class exams, you must present a documented letter from the Disability Office.

What to do in Case of Emergency

If we have an emergency in class, go promptly to inform Jean Toothman, Department Secretary (Room 3135) and Dana Ringuette, Chair (Room 3341) and dial 911.

ABSENCE POLICY

The university states in its attendance policy that you are expected to attend every class as scheduled because teaching/learning requires dialogue and when you are not there you do not engage in scholarship with others and you miss out on the logic presented in class (learning that cannot be adequately made up outside of class). University policy states that you are expected to participate actively in the learning process: this expectation means that it is your responsibility to read assignments, take careful notes on the reading, do homework exercises as assigned and provide those answers in class, volunteer responses in class, and ask questions about the material. Students who come to class do a lot of work, in other words, both oral and written, and so those who choose not to engage in that process merit taking the consequences.

There are consequences to not being in class.

1. 3 or 4 absences in the course will result in lowering of the final grade. With three absences, the final grade will be lowered by one-third. That means that if the final grade is a B on exams and papers, it will be lowered to a B-; if the final grade is a B-, it will be lowered to a C+. With four absences, the final grade will be lowered by one letter grade. If your average is a C in the course on exams and papers, your final grade in the course will be a D.
2. More than four absences in this course will result in failure of the course, regardless of grades received on papers or exams.
3. Because the university considers class time essential to a student's learning, students who have excessive absences (more than 4, excused or unexcused) will be advised to withdraw from the class in order to facilitate their success when they take the class over again at a later date.
4. Only students with an excused absence on the day of any scheduled exam may take an alternative exam, of different format, within the week of the scheduled exam.
5. I will expect you to find out from someone in the class what you've missed so that you'll be prepared for the next class meeting. Worksheets will only be distributed once; it is your responsibility to photocopy assignments from another student if you are absent.
6. Please do not tell me your reasons for not coming to class unless they are excusable according to university policy and please do not ask me what documentation you need. I do not grant permissions, in other words, for any absence. It is your responsibility to make your own decisions and to supply the best documentation you can.
7. According to university policy, there are reasons why you may be excused from class. They are listed below. However, they will be excused only if you follow the procedures outlined here in the syllabus.
--For any excused reason, you must notify me by leaving a message on my voice mail at 581-5012 (not email) before class begins on the day of your absence.
--When you return to class at the next class meeting, you must bring me a sheet of paper with the following information: your name, the date of your absence, the reason for your absence, and attached documentation that documents proof of why you weren't in class. Any absence without appropriate documentation will not be excused.

Definition of excused absence on back

Definition, according to university policy, of an excused absence:

1. University obligation, in which case you will need to present me with a letter at the beginning of the semester explaining the purpose and date of your upcoming absence.
2. Your medical illness or emergency, in which case you will need to notify me by leaving a message on my voice mail at 581-5012 (not email) before class begins on the day of your absence. Routine medical appointments or non-emergency medical appointments should not be scheduled during class time; the health services on campus are here so that you will not have to leave town for medical reasons. In addition, students experiencing personal problems should seek help immediately through the counseling services provided on campus so that personal problems don't interfere with the responsibility of being in class.

COURSE READINGS

Please read and do the assignment before coming to class on the date given here.

Lit = *Literature and the Human Experience* (all essays, stories, poems are in this book)

Griffith = *Writing Essays about Literature*

Handbook = *The Little, Brown Handbook*

**This calendar should be used as a guideline. We may change some dates depending on the needs of the class.

UNIT I

SHORT FICTION ANALYSIS (LOVE/HATE CONFLICTS)

Jan 7 Introduction to the course and how you will be evaluated

Jan 9 Why do we Read Literature?

Prepare your own notes for the following for discussion only:

1. Why do we read **literature**? Classify and list as many different reasons as you can. What is the importance of reading in our lives?
2. What is your response to people who say they never read literature?
3. What is a good working definition of active, critical reading? What strategies are employed in this method of reading?
4. How do we read an **essay (non-fiction)**? How is reading non-fiction different from reading **fiction**?

Read 2 essays:

1. Helen Fisher, Lit, "Dumped!", pp. 1080-1084 and
2. Laura Kipnis, Lit, "Against Love," pp. 1085-1091

Jan 11 **Folder Writing assignment due**, p. 1092 under Writing Connections, # 1 and #3.

Jan 14 Summary Writing vs Analytical Writing

Read Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants," Lit, pp. 810-814 and p. 1380
(Think carefully about questions, pp. 813-814; be ready to discuss them)

Jan 16 **Folder Writing Assignment Due:** Look up in a collegiate dictionary and write out as many definitions as possible for the words "love" vs "hate" vs "obsession" and sum up what you notice is different about the meaning of these words. What do you notice are subtle differences in meaning; explain connotations associated with each term. (Keep in folder)

Plagiarism and Documentation; presentation of papers in MLA format; present tense and time; tense shifting

How to Prepare a Presentation (handout I will give you in class and Lit, "Exploring Fiction Questions," pp. 6-11)

Assignment of Presenters

- Jan 18 **One's Job**
Setting and Theme
 Read Suarez, "A Perfect Hotspot," Lit, pp. 132-137; be prepared to discuss questions, p. 137; Bio p. 1421
 Gelardi, "*Multiple Dimensions of Love: From the Artist's Eyes*" (handout)
- Jan 21 Holiday
- Jan 23 **Parents**
Character and Conflict
 Read Tan, "Two Kinds," Lit, 352-360; be prepared to discuss questions, p. 360
 Bio, p. 1422
 Read Alexie, "Jesus Christ's Half-Brother is Alive and Well on the Spokane Indian Reservation" (handout)
- Jan 25 **Husbands and Wives**
Plot
 Read Mason, "Shiloh," (handout)
- Jan 28 Read Carver, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love," Lit, pp. 896-906;
 be prepared to discuss questions, p. 905-906
 Bio, p. 1360
- Jan 30 **Friendship**
Point of View
 Read Cooper, "A Clack of Tiny Sparks: Remembrances of a Gay Boyhood," (handout--
 be prepared to discuss questions)
- Feb 1 **The Self**
Tone
 Read Walker, "Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self," (handout and questions)
- Feb 4 **Love of Humanity**
Essay Argumentation
 Read King, "An Experiment in Love: Nonviolent Resistance" (handout)
 For discussion: State the thesis of the essay and summarize all the logical points
 King uses in his argumentation to support his thesis.
 Read Dalai Lama, "The Ethics of Compassion"
- Feb 6 **Hatred and Conformity**
Irony and Symbolism
 Read Jackson, "The Lottery," pp. 339-345

Feb 8

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

ANALYZING THEMES OF LOVE, HATE, AND OBSESSION IN BALDWIN'S "SONNY'S BLUES"

Read Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues", Lit, pp. 560-584; Bio, p. 1355-1356

Writing Preparation for Paper I. (Keep in folder)

PAPER I DUE FEB 13--MINIMUM 5 TYPED PAGES

We will not be discussing "Sonny's Blues" in class. Your job is now to figure it out on your own.

FORMAL PAPER I PROMPT

FIRST DRAFT PAPER I DUE FEB 13--MINIMUM 5 TYPED PAGES

How do the plot, setting, and characterization in "Sonny's Blues" help us to figure out the role music plays in the theme of love, hate, and obsession of the story? You must address the following: 1) What effects does Baldwin achieve by rearranging the order of events? 2) Think about setting as home, neighborhood, community. 3) Make sure you discuss the importance of music in the conclusion and the title. 4) Why and how is music important to each of the characters?

Feb 8

Come to class with your process writing folder. By today you should have

1. annotated notes on the story
2. a working thesis (consult your handbook on thesis if needed, pp. 27-32)
3. an outline of your paper in any form you like (consult your handbook if needed, pp. 33-45) in which you consider how you are going to logically organize your arguments
4. the first paragraph of your paper

Question and Answer Session--Anything you want to ask about the story

Feb 8-11 If you are stuck, see me in my office.

Griffith, pp. 227-243 (Drafting the Essay)

Use Griffith, pp. 218-224 as a sample model

Feb 11

Workshop on Paper I

Feb 13

COMPLETE FIRST DRAFT PAPER I DUE (turn in to me)

BRING TWO COMPLETE COPIES TO CLASS

Preparation for conference

Feb 15

Holiday

Feb 18-22

CONFERENCES AND REVISION WEEK

No formal class--INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

COME TO MY OFFICE AT YOUR APPOINTED TIME

This week you should be

1. Going to individual conferences
2. Revising your paper for content and clarity (Handbook, pp. 54)
3. Editing your paper for sentence strength (Handbook, pp. 60-65)

4. Proofreading your paper (Handbook, p. 66)
5. Retyping a clean, final draft

AND

PREPARING FOR THE POETRY UNIT

1. Look through your Literature anthology (pp. xxvii-xlvi). Browse through it and read some poems at your leisure. Decide on a poem that you would like to work on for your formal paper. You must observe the following criteria for your selection:
 - a. It must be a poem that is new to you, that you have never read before.
 - b. Select a poem that you enjoy but that you do not fully understand, that still has some mystery to you, or that you're really puzzled about.
 - c. Select a poem that intrigues you so much that you want to spend a lot of time with it.
 - d. You must pick a poem (not song lyrics, or other subgenres)
 - e. You must pick a poem centered on our theme of hate or obsession.
2. On a sheet of paper, write the title of the poem, the author, and the page # it appears on in your textbook.

Please turn all of the above in to me on Feb 25.

Feb 25

FINAL PAPER I AND FOLDER DUE AND POEMS SELECTED